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cedures commonly used. In reviewing the material one is struck with the fact that all "systems" of physical training as hitherto known have been flung together into one common melting-pot with an alloy resulting which we can designate by no one name. It is appropriate however that this should be so, for racial differences are losing themselves rapidly in the heated turmoil of American life, and the mixture welds itself into the bronze of the type we are glad to call American. Just so has Mr. Mero made his playground suggestions of a mixture we can but call "play." There is and should be no choice or distinction based upon other considerations than function; the day of authority is past and adaptation has taken its place.

The scissors and paste have been judiciously used so that the last part of the book tells almost everything from how to approach the taxpayers on behalf of a playground to the abstract philosophy of play. Each item will no doubt be of use to someone and all the items are of value to the serious student of the subject, even if he is endowed with a sense of humor.

Mr. Mero has certainly given us a book containing much practical information. His prefatory statements that it is a "book of service" and not a literary of use to someone and all the items are of value to the serious student of the subject, even if he is endowed with a sense of humor.

C. WARD CRAMPTON

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NEW YORK CITY

The Rural School in the United States. By JOHN COULTER HOCKENBURY.
Published by the Author, Westfield, Mass., 1908. Pp. 124. \$0.75.

This book is a pioneer, a proof in itself of the declaration made in the preface: "There has been a birth of interest in this important subject in the past dozen years." This birth is well said by the author to point to a sphere of influence and activity for educational and social leadership that is unprecedented in our educational history. A strongly felt need of a better understanding of the rural-school problem prompted the author, and, in so far as the fixing in general terms of a fairly reliable background for a more thorough study giving carefully defined conclusions helps to a better understanding, the author admirably accomplishes his purpose.

The body of the book is made up of nine chapters. The first two are intended to mark progress up to date in economic, social, and educational conditions in rural life. The third chapter compares the American rural school with the Prussian, and the fourth chapter contrasts rural- and urban-school conditions in America. Chapters five, six, and seven constitute an attempt to fix the present status of the rural school in the United States. The two concluding chapters forecast future progress. The book is well indexed, and a list of one hundred and thirty-one valuable specific references is added.

The author's discussion of the means in active use promising better economic and social conditions in the country is very good, and lacks only a summarized statement of the contributions already made by the rapidly improving rural school to make it quite complete. In assembling the causes of the rural exodus, the effect of inventions lessening hand labor and increasing the ease of concen-

trating manufacture is not emphasized. The results already at hand from the thirteen agencies for rural betterment which are discussed are given too meager consideration. Likewise, in the comparison of the rural schools of today with those of an earlier day, the study lacks intensity, both for the earlier and for the present day.

In the comparison with Prussian rural schools and American urban schools, the absence of an adequately defined type of the American rural school is the most serious obstacle. This has not prevented a convincing statement of the imperative need of a better character of instruction and far more efficient supervision in American rural schools.

Any attempt at present to fix the status of rural schools in more than a general way by a comparison with urban schools begs the question. The fairly accurate knowledge of city-school conditions which is available makes possible the selection of a type, but the lack of equally reliable and adequate information regarding rural schools makes an honest comparison by types impossible. Then, too, widely differing fundamental factors make such a comparison of little value, at best. The author's general conclusions are full of helpful suggestions. The particular are sometimes confused with the general statements.

A fine spirit of prophecy adds vitality to the last chapters. In a discussion covering twenty pages the factors of the future rural school, which are drawn with the color of feeling, are more convincing than those features for which a basis in facts has been sought. That several of the author's prophecies are already history is an aid to faith.

The appeal of this book, a definitely compelling appeal, is for more work on the same subject; for the best leadership equipped, inspired, and enlisted for life in the service of the rural school. The author has well earned a large public obligation.

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Character-Forming in School. By FLORENCE HOWARD ELLIS. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1907. Pp. 235.

The author states that this book has been compiled to show that the theory of "every book on education," of Plato, Pestalozzi, Froebel, and Herbart, "that character is the chief function of the teacher, has become practice in a large elementary school, the ages of the children ranging from three to fourteen years of age."

The lessons are based on "Thoughts." The infants have but one a month while the older ones spend but a week upon each. Throughout this period, "and whenever possible in every lesson, the Thought [always with a capital T] is reiterated until the desire to *be* as the ideal has become a habit."

There are numerous quotations at the beginning of chapters and elsewhere—these are from Plato, the Bible, Ruskin, and others. The following stanza has no quotation marks, so presumably it is original: